GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7265
ANSWERED ON:14.05.2002
UPLIFTMENT OF CHILDREN
VILAS BABURAO MUTTEMWAR

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have not been able to achieve the target it had committed at the 1990 World Summit for Children as brought out in a news-item Captioned 'UN child meet may expose Indian record' appearingin 'The Times of India' dated 19.4.2002;

(b) if so, the reasons contributing to the lack of required facilities as revealed in the report to the UN Secretary General's report; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to create adequate facilities for the upliftment of children and their proper care?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN)

(a) India has made steady progress in several sectors in achieving the targets committed at the World Summit on children held in 1990. The areas in which the improvement has been made are as under:

1. Under five mortality rate: per thousand live births, reduced in 5 years from 109 (1992-93)(NFHS I) to 94.9 (1998- 1999)(NFHS II).

2. Infant mortality rate: per thousand live births reduced from 80 (1990)(SRS) to 68 (1998-1999)(NFHS II).

3. Underweight prevalence from 53.4% (1922-93)(NFHS I) to 47% (1998-99)(NFHS II).

4. Stunting prevalence from 52% (1992-93)(NFHS I) to 45.5% (1998-99)(NFHS II).

5. Wasting prevalence from 17.5% (1992-93)(NFHS I) to 15.5% (1998-99)(NFHS II).

6. School attendance, age 6-14 (female) improved from 59% (1992-93)(NFHS I) to 74% (1998-1999)(NFHS II).

7. School Attendance, age 6-14 (male) went up from 75.5% (1992-93)(NFHS I) to 84% (1998-1999)(NFHS II).

(b) There are several factors for which the targets for children could not be achieved. It includes large population, limited resources, poverty, lack of awareness, etc.

(c) The Government is taking adequate steps to improve the condition of children in the country. Several Ministries and Departments of the Government of India are implementing various schemes and programmes for the development of children. The Reproductive and Child Health Programmewas launched in 1997 providing child health care and maternal services. A major initiative is the Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan with the primary objective to provide free and quality elementary education to all children by 2010. It proposes to cover all districts in the country by the end of Ninth Plan. The proposed Constitutional (93rd Amendment) Bill, 2001 has the objective of making education of all children in the age group of 6-14 years a fundamental right. The Government is in the process of finalising a National Nutrition Mission for the eradication of malnutrition in the country. The Government proposes to adopt a National Policy and Charter for Children and establish a National Commission forChildren to oversee proper implementation of existing laws for children and protection of child rights. The Integrated Child Development Services Programme deliversan integrated package of basic services including supplementary nutrition, preschool education, immunization, health checkup, referral services, nutrition and health education. The programme is covering 314.43 lakhs children below 6 years and 62.25 lakh pregnant and lactating women through 5652 ICDS projects.